



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

## KILLED BY THE INDIANS.

---

A TRUE STORY, BY HON. AUSTIN HUTSON.

[Contributed by Hon E. Callahan, Robinson, Ill.]

In the Year of Our Lord, 1810, Isaac Hutson, Sen., with a family consisting of a lovely and beautiful wife, and five interesting children, "bundled up" their moveable effects, bid farewell to an aged father and mother, living near the village of Solon, Madison County, Ohio, and upon pack horses, in company with ten or twelve other fearless adventurers, plunged into the dense and trackless forests, traveled half way through the State of Ohio, across the Indiana Territory, and halted at Fort Lamot, (La Motte) in Lamot (La Motte) Prairie, Crawford County, Illinois, just opposite Merom, on the west side of the Wabash River. The fort was then in progress of erection, the Indians very troublesome, and as there were comparatively few persons engaged in building the fort, the unlooked for advent of the little emigrant party was hailed with irrepressible demonstrations of joy. But a looker-on would most certainly have been puzzled to decide which of the two parties were the happiest.

No letters of introduction, or observance of rigid forms of showy etiquette were required.

After a lonely, uncertain and fatiguing journey of many weeks; through cheerless wilds, without a sight of the "human face divine," exposed every hour to the scalping knife of the savage, and to the prowling beasts of the forest, their happiness on seeing the curling smoke, listening to the sound of the ax, and hearing the sweet songs of patriotism and civilization, was, to the appreciative, no matter of amazement.

Upon the other hand, the brave party of the fort, labor-

ing and guarding, day and night, menaced by hostile Indians, whose fiendish yells and village tents could be heard and seen in the distance, and concerning whose bloody deeds they each day heard a fearful story, thus engaged and thus environed, no wonder that the immigrant arrival caused joy and gladness to the heroic defenders of the unfinished "City of Refuge." The newcomers, after a few days of rest and arrangements, willingly assisted in the urgent work of the fort, and it was to them a novel scene to witness the daily military maneuverings; to see the scouts return, some of them Indians,—treacherous wretches,—professing friendship for the whites at all hours of the day, reporting a greater or less number of warlike Indians seen in this or that direction, and very often reciting tales of murder, burning and bloodshed. One Indian called "The Pet," soon attracted their respectful attention by his many and earnest pretensions of devotion to the white man; and this same dubious pet became, in a short time, the confidant of Mr. Isaac Hutson, who, unfortunate man, knew but little of the heartlessness of the pretended Indian fidelity. Those but slightly acquainted with the history of the Indian War in the Wabash Valley in 1811-12, need not be informed that the situation of the citizens and soldiers of Fort La Motte was anything but pleasant. But, notwithstanding the paucity of their numbers,—about two hundred soldiers and citizens,—being well-armed, unflinchingly brave, and well skilled in the mode of Indian warfare, they became a terror to the savage foe for many leagues around; and this dread of the Spartan defenders of the fort was accompanied, of course, with burning hatred and fiendish plot against the whites of the surrounding country, without regard to age or sex. This hatred frequently culminated in the most cruel butcheries and horrid torturings of the unfortunate victims falling into their merciless grasp.

But finally the Indians moved their portable villages, seeking a more suitable field for their bloody tragedies, leaving only a few roving bands behind, which caused the

farmers of the fort to immediately re-occupy their little improvements, consisting of log cabins and a few acres of cultivated lands, adjoining their humble dwellings. The newcomers laid their claims, erected shanties or cabins upon them, cultivated small patches of ground and began to feel, after having endured many hardships, a certain degree of safety in their limited agricultural pursuits, when the burning of the Hutson family aroused the whole country to arms, and reproduced those sickening scenes which they fondly, but vainly, hoped had forever passed. When I was quite young, my father, by repetitions of this heart-rending story to friends and strangers so impressed my mind with the horrors of the hellish deed, as to cause in my heart an unconquerable hatred toward all the treacherous aborigines of America. There is upon the tablet of my memory an ineffaceable image of the revolting scene, and I hear a voice of duty emanating from the mysterious depths of the conscience, saying, "Write!" and, although fifty-five years have elapsed, and La Motte Prairie is one solid block of farms, adorned with beautiful frame houses, the lands once worth one dollar and twenty-five cents per acre, now worth from forty to seventy dollars per acre, in the north, south, and east, seen at one glance, this historic prairie is skirted by three thriving villages, and where once was heard the reveille of Fort La Motte, now is heard, from the neighboring Merom Bluff, the musical tones of the bell of Union Christian College, and I am encouraged to comply with the silent monitions of the voice, notwithstanding time and change. Ah! do I not remember the alternate impulses of anger and pity, as the story progressed, touching Indian barbarity, and the untold pleadings and sufferings of the heroic wife and faithful children?—when the latter by the former were confined in the house, the house set on fire, and—

The infant from the mother's breast was torn,  
And then by ruthless, bloody hands was borne  
To the foaming caldron.

Into the kettle full of boiling soap,  
 They cast the mother's hope.  
 Thank God, the past shall ne'er return,  
 Instead the Indian, now the white man lives,  
 To whom a providence so freely gives this land.

Mr. Hutson's cabin was built in the northern edge of the prairie, where now stands a large brick house, two miles south of the village of Hutsonville, named for him in memoriam of his deep affliction.

The victory gained over the Indians by General Harrison and his brave army, at Tippecanoe on the morning of the 7th of November, 1811, struck terror into the savage hordes all along the frontier of Indiana, and for a few months the Indians put on the deceptive semblance of peace. The men ventured away from home on business of urgent necessity, but not without feelings of uneasiness and dread, at times almost fearing to return lest they should find their families butchered or burned up by the implacable enemy, whose wrath was liable to return in rages of untold fury.

"We should suspect some danger nigh,  
 Where we possess delight."

Mr. Hutson not unfrequently experienced a delusive degree of safety, at least to his family in his absence, from the repeated assurances of the Pet Indian of the friendly disposition of the neighboring tribes. On a lovely day in the summer of 1812, Mr. Hutson crossed over to the Indiana side, to procure some provisions,—the informant, a personal friend of Mr. Hutson, says a sack of meal, but did not return until late in the evening, and then, not to meet, as he often had, a smiling wife and bounding children, but to be a witness of the sad and overwhelming fact that his dear ones were no more. In a low place in the prairie, he was met by his trusty dog, and knew at once from Rover's unmistakable signs of grief, that all was not right. He came with surprising speed, and when opposite his

master, who had been, on account of a tired horse and a heavy boat, traveling slowly, stopped suddenly, placed his fore feet upon the end of the sack, whined piteously, darted off in the direction of the cabin, howling most sorrowfully. For a moment the horse and rider were still; the impatient dog repeated the ominous signs, which caused the father and husband to feel strange sensations of heart and blood. Mr. Hutson threw the sack upon the ground,

And spurred to dangerous speed,  
His panting, tired steed.

Ascending a rolling eminence, about one mile from his humble dwelling, he saw the smoldering flames, the faint glare, the curling smoke, but no groans of pain or shrieks of despair came from the hissing coals and sighing embers of the pioneer's cabin. The dog encircled the fire with piercing howls; the master sat motionless upon his foaming horse for several awful minutes, then gave vent to a flood of tears, which he quickly brushed away with the rough hand of toil, and raising his manly form, nerving his legs, placing his feet against the sides of his noble steed, he took an oath of revenge upon all Indians, friendly and unfriendly, after which he repeated, in angry tones, "The Pet Indian!" "The Pet Indian!" A few moments of silence ensued; the features grew pale; the hand which had been raised to heaven in the fearful oath, fell listlessly upon the mane; the system relaxed; the face became haggard; the countenance beseeching; the eyes now incapable of tears—for sorrow may dry their fountain—were turned toward heaven, but now, with the most pitiable expression, the sorrow-smitten pioneer cried out, "My wife! O! my children!" But this agonizing expression of grief received no answer, save the hideous echo of the adjacent forest.

Mr. Hutson, within one hour after his arrival at the scene of the destruction of his earthly hopes, became partially capable of reasoning, and was inspired with the hope, first, that his family had escaped to some of the neighbors for protection and were safe or perhaps to the fort. Under

this pleasing impression, he started off through the settlement, hailing the houses but receiving no answer; and arriving at the fort, found most of the settlers there collected for mutual defense and protection against the hated foe; but no wife or children, which caused him to exclaim, with a heart-rending tone, "Burned to death, or miserable captives!"

Others had tales of burning houses, murdered friends, and captured children to relate; but the thoughtful and the self-possessed advised preparation for a defense, for the "crouching foe," said one, "may now be near us." "Let them come," said Mr. Hutson; "I have been robbed of all that is worth living for, and I long to meet the enemy that I may drown my sorrow in the sweets of revenge."

The dreary night passed away and the morning's sun, if it fell in apparent mockery upon the ashes and charred bones of wife and children, also cast its golden rays upon the heroic citizen soldier prepared for the pursuit and punishment of the retreating savages, but the pursuit was in vain; the main body of the enemy escaped.

This pursuing party, in passing the cinders of the emigrant's cabin, stopped just long enough to cast looks of mingled wrath and commiseration upon the glaring relics, and then, with dire resolve, dashed forth into forest and glade, through the rank grass of the prairies, into the willows and ambush of their borders. Forward! with the speed and fearlessness of those accustomed to facing danger and enduring perils of every revolting description, moved the brave avengers. We remarked that their pursuit was in vain, but those eager pursuers, perhaps, thought differently, for many a straggler did their unerring rifles bring to the dust. And the red men finding that the whites were in pursuit and in desperate earnestness, stopped not until they had put many miles between them and the dreaded pale face foe.

Mr. Hutson, with a few intimate friends, remained for a while at the place which had been to him more like home

than all other localities of temporary stays, since his restless residence upon the border. There was here and there a flickering blaze, a few glaring coals and charred smoking forms. Water was applied; the intensity of the heat reduced, and an examination made which revealed the frightful fact,—adding another bloody page to the history of Indian barbarity,—that Mrs. Hutson and her six children had been consumed in the fire.

The bones of Mrs. Hutson and those of her nearest son were found near the fire place. As the doors were barred, they had either attempted to climb out of the chimney, or rescue the little babe from the soap kettle into which it had been thrown, no doubt, before the house was fired. The kettle was suspended from an old fashioned crane, which was fastened in the jamb, and swung around like a gate. Think of the feelings of that mother when she saw her tender infant, about six months old, torn from her bosom by bloody hands and cast into the kettle. The sweet little hands are seen struggling with the bubbling surface; the strangling gurgle is heard; the foaming lava leaps the sides of the kettle; a noise of quenching fire is heard, mingled with the pleadings of the agonized mother, the deafening screams of the children and the threats of the brutal savages. Then followed the blows of the tomahawk; deep wounds were inflicted, from which the blood in streams did flow; the rough unpolished puncheon floor was colored red with human gore. The doors were fastened and the rude cabin set on fire. Around the burning house the remorseless red men danced with fiendish glee and yelled with demoniac merriment.

What must have been the feelings of those helpless, wounded ones, when the consuming heat and hissing flames enveloped them—and one of their murderers a professed friend, the Pet Indian!

Mr. Hutson kept his vow of revenge, for many a redskin fell before his unerring musket. The memory of his wife and children, at sight of an Indian, rendered him a danger-



ous, daring and reckless foe. How could it be otherwise? Human endurance has its limits, and, driven to desperation, hopeless madness, no wonder that life itself became an offering of small consideration.